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MI Dept. of Agriculture Shrinks the Bovine TB Zone to Small Area of Northeastern Lower Michigan

Changes will help keep state cattle farmers in business

Lansing - Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) Director Don Koivisto today announced the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved shrinking the state's Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) to a small area in northern Lower Michigan. MDA also updated Michigan's zoning order in Public Act 466, as amended, the Animal Industry Act to parallel the federal changes. MDA's zoning rule changes are effective January 4, 2010.

"After months of public hearings, educational meetings, and discussions with federal regulatory officials, we are happy to report Michigan cattle producers and MDA are one step closer to concentrating our disease eradication efforts in the zone where we know bovine TB exists," Koivisto said. "Federal rule and zoning order changes are based on the national program and will help keep Michigan farmers in business while preventing spread of bovine TB outside of the zone."

Bovine TB is a contagious bacterial disease of cattle that can affect other mammals, including humans. In 1917, the federal government established a nationwide Bovine TB Eradication Program. The program assigns status levels for each state based on the prevalence of the disease in that state.

In 1994, a wild Michigan white-tailed deer was diagnosed with a unique strain of bovine TB. As a result, MDA began a comprehensive surveillance plan to determine the extent of the disease in Michigan's livestock. Based on initial surveillance, USDA downgraded Michigan's Bovine TB Free Status in 2000 from Free to Modified Accredited. This drop in status resulted in extensive restrictions on animal movement with burdensome regulations on Michigan's cattle producers.

Since 1998, 46 Michigan cattle farms and four privately owned cervid operations have been bovine TB positive. The majority of farms have been depopulated. In 2008, two cattle herds and one privately owned cervid operation were found positive, and in 2009 only one cattle herd and one privately owned cervid operation have been confirmed positive for bovine TB - all of these farms were in the smaller MAZ.

MDA, in partnership with Michigan State University Extension, will launch an outreach and education campaign. Producers in the affected areas will receive an informational packet on the changes. The new Michigan rules have different regulatory applications for the following zones and subzones:

Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) -

Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, Oscoda, Presque Isle counties and those parts of Iosco and Ogemaw counties north of the southernmost boundaries of the Huron National Forest and the Au Sable State Forest.

Modified Accredited Advanced Zone (MAAZ) -

- Subzone 1 - Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Crawford, Emmet, and Otsego counties.
- Subzone 2 - Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Osceola, Roscommon, and Wexford counties, and those portions of Iosco and Ogemaw counties not included in the MAZ.
- Subzone 3 - All counties in Lower Michigan not included in the MAAZ Subzone 1, Subzone 2, or the MAZ.

Bovine TB Free - Upper Peninsula

The proposed bovine TB zonal boundaries were presented to the Michigan Commission of Agriculture on July 21, 2009. Additionally, the proposed rules were published in the legal section of 16 newspapers statewide, posted on both the MDA and Emerging Diseases websites, and were presented at public meetings in July.

Go to the MDA and Emerging Diseases websites for a map and additional information including a booklet explaining the Split State Status and Zoning Rule changes at www.michigan.gov/mda or www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases.

The Split State Status rule is posted in the Federal Register under:
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/E9-30128.htm>.

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